

**2013 NEZ PERCE NATIONAL FOREST  
SMALL NEPA PROJECT DESCRIPTION FORM**

District	Red River
Proponent Name and Phone Number	Marty Jones 208-983-5158
Project Name	Baldy Creek Placer
Legal Location	T30N, R7E, Sections 18, 19
Charge Code	NFMG17
Line Officer's Name (Responsible for signing the decision)	Ed Koberstein
Date Line Officer was informed of project (Forest Supervisor requires formal briefing)	
In which watershed and subwatershed is the project located? ( <i>Clearwater, Hangman/Palouse/Rock, Lower North Fork Clearwater, Lochsa, Middle Fork Clearwater, South Fork Clearwater, Salmon, Selway, Upper North Fork Clearwater</i> )	Baldy Creek, Tributary to Newsome Creek
In which CE Category does this project fit? (36 CFR 220.6 CE categories can be found at: O:\NFS\NezPerceClearwater\Project\MultiBasin\Planning\ActiveSmallNepa\Info_Re_Roadless_Wilderness_RNA_WSR_Municipal_ceCategory)	(8) Short-term (1 year or less) mineral, energy, or geophysical investigations and their incidental support activities that may require cross-country travel by vehicles and equipment, construction of less than 1 mile of low standard road, or use and minor repair of existing roads. Examples include, but are not limited to: (i) Authorizing geophysical investigations which use existing roads that may require incidental repair to reach sites for drilling core holes, temperature gradient holes, or seismic shot holes; (ii) Gathering geophysical data using shot hole, vibroseis, or surface charge methods; (iii) Trenching to obtain evidence of mineralization; (iv) Clearing vegetation for sight paths or from areas used for investigation or support facilities; (v) Redesigning or rearranging surface facilities within an approved site; (vi) Approving interim and final site restoration measures; and (vii) Approving a plan for exploration which authorizes repair of an existing road and the construction of 1/3 mile of temporary road; clearing vegetation from an acre of land for trenches, drill pads, or support facilities

In what management area is the project located? See Forest Maps below at [http://www.fs.fed.us/cnpz/forest/documents/fp\\_docs/np\\_forest\\_plan/nez\\_eis\\_ma\\_map\\_front.pdf](http://www.fs.fed.us/cnpz/forest/documents/fp_docs/np_forest_plan/nez_eis_ma_map_front.pdf) [http://www.fs.fed.us/cnpz/forest/documents/fp\\_docs/np\\_forest\\_plan/nez\\_eis\\_ma\\_map\\_back.pdf](http://www.fs.fed.us/cnpz/forest/documents/fp_docs/np_forest_plan/nez_eis_ma_map_back.pdf)  
List all management areas in which your project is located.  
MA4, MA10

What are the desired conditions for your management area? *Desired conditions are the forestwide management area goals and standards described in Chapters 2 & 3 of the Nez Perce Forest Plan.*

**MA4**

**Description**

Management Area 4 consists of active or recently active mineral extraction and processing operations. As other mining operations are identified, total acreage in this management area will increase; as areas are rehabilitated, the acres in this management area will decrease. These areas are not displayed on management area maps.

**Goals**

Encourage valid exploration and development of mineral resources while minimizing surface impacts from mineral activities.

**MA10**

**Description**

Management Area 10 consists of lakes, lakeside lands, perennial streams, seasonally flowing streams supporting riparian vegetation, and adjoining lands that are dominated by riparian vegetation. The width of the components of this management area varies and is determined by the riparian vegetation and the valley bottom width. Riparian vegetation is vegetation requiring a high level of soil moisture. The area is often nearly flat and is subject to various degrees of flooding or saturation. As additional acres of riparian areas are identified and mapped during project planning, the acres in this management area will increase. This area includes the floodplains of streams and the wetlands associated with springs, lakes, and ponds. The natural and beneficial values of riparian areas include ground water recharge, moderation of flood peaks, maintenance of water quality, visual and recreational enjoyment, fish and wildlife habitat, cultural resources, and timber and forage production. In addition to the 11,859 acres mapped for this management area, there are 10,214 acres of this management emphasis which occur as inclusions in other management areas.

**Goals**

Manage riparian areas to maintain and enhance their value for wildlife, fishery and aquatic habitat, and water quality. Manage timber, grazing, and recreation to give preferential consideration to riparian dependent species on that portion of the management area "suitable" for timber management, grazing, or recreation. The goal for summer elk habitat in this management area is to manage 1,615 acres to achieve at least 75 percent of habitat potential; 6,815 acres to achieve at least 50 percent of habitat potential; and 2,875 acres to achieve at least 25 percent of habitat potential. Specific methods of how to achieve this will be determined on a site-specific basis during project planning.

**Standards for minerals related activities**

1. Recommend "no surface occupancy" in mineral leases.
2. Address reestablishment of fish habitat in all reclamation plans where habitat may be damaged by proposed mineral exploration or development activities.
3. Require specific mitigation and reclamation measures which address stream bed and stream bank stabilization, proper location and construction of settling ponds, and timely reestablishment of riparian vegetation.

Is the project in a Wilderness Area? No

Is the project in the Wild and Scenic River Corridor? No

Is the project in the Hell's Canyon National Recreation Area?	No
Is the project in a Research Natural Area?	No
Are municipal watersheds located in the project area?	No
Are floodplains, wetlands, or RHCAs located in the project area?	Yes
Is the project in a Roadless Area?	No
Is the project a vegetation or fuels treatment project?	No
Does the project involve road construction, reconstruction, temp roads, or haul routes?	No
Describe the current conditions of the project area and need for the proposed action.	
<p><b>Current Condition</b></p> <p>The project area lies within riparian areas in the Baldy Creek drainage. The area is vegetated with riparian and upland vegetation and timber of mixed species. The area of proposed activities has been partly affected by historic placer mining activities. A primitive two track road accesses the area from Forest Road 1858 beginning at the mouth of Baldy Creek. This road crosses Baldy Creek at several points via non hardened fords.</p> <p><b>Purpose and Need</b></p> <p>The purpose of the proposed action is to test for gold values on unpatented mining claims. The need is to determine if sufficient quantities of valuable minerals exist to warrant further exploration or development.</p>	

Describe the Proposed Action. *Explain **who** wants to do **what**, **where** and **why** they want to do it, **when** it would be done, and **how** it would be accomplished.*

Ron Miller and Marty Sanford propose to excavate up to 12 placer test pits in the Baldy Creek drainage. These pits will be dug with a small (16,000 lb) excavator and sized 10' X 10' maximum down to bedrock if possible. Material will be processed by first excavating all materials from a pit, separating it by layers (topsoil, overburden, pay material, etc. Material will then be hauled with a small endloader to the processing site where they will be processed through a small highbanker type sluice box. Two small settling ponds will be constructed to hold process water and settle out sediments. Process water will initially be drawn from Baldy Creek, then will be recirculated from the settling ponds. When sampling is finished at one test pit, it will be refilled with material, topsoil will be replaced, and the affected area will be reseeded and mulched as needed. Only one pit will be open at a time. Access will be by existing roads and trails. No new road or trail reconstruction will be required.

Reclamation will be concurrent with the operation. As testing is completed at each pit, it will be reclaimed, recontoured, and seeded and mulched as needed. At the completion of the project the settling ponds will be refilled, topsoil will be replaced, and all disturbed areas will be reseeded and mulched as needed.

This project is anticipated to start during the 2013 field season and may last a total of two field seasons.

No live water or wetlands will be directly affected by this proposal. An appropriate buffer of at least 20' will be maintained between any surface disturbance and adjacent streams or wetland areas. Some dead and/or down timber may be removed for access and safety. A number of small trees may need to be removed. These will be cut down and piled to one side, then scattered about the immediate area and left in place for erosion control when work is finished. Merchantable sized trees will not be removed without prior review and authorization from the District Ranger. A standard set of mitigation measures has been developed for exploration proposals of this type and will be implemented as appropriate for this project along with any additional mitigation that is appropriate. In addition, Idaho Best Management Practices for Mining will be adhered to. A field review which includes the operator will be necessary before the project is initiated to identify specific sites and related issues and possible site specific mitigation measures.

This project is currently proposed for the spring and summer of 2013 and may extend through the 2014 operating season, depending on weather and timing. Duration of the operation will be one year or less.

A water permit will be obtained from the Idaho Department of Water Resources before water may be drafted from any stream located on Forest Service lands.

A reclamation bond will be calculated for the amount necessary to do needed restoration work and will be submitted by the operator before the Plan of Operation is approved and before work may begin.

Access to the project area is by Forest Road 1858 up Newsome Creek to the mouth of Baldy Creek, where a primitive two track road leads upstream to the project area.

What Best Management Practices (BMPs) were used to plan this project?

*At a minimum, consider appropriate BMPs for water quality standards, and weed management. Source documents for approved BMPs can be found at:*

*O:\NFS\NezPerceClearwater\Project\MultiBasin\Planning\ActiveSmallNepa\Info\_Re\_Roadless\_Wilderness\_RNA\_WSR\_Municipal\_ceCategory\bmps*

State of Idaho BMPs for mining

Standard mitigation measures for placer mining, developed by Forest Service

**ATTACH A PROJECT MAP TO THIS FORM (REQUIRED)**

Please attach a 7.5 minute series (topographic) 1:24000 quad map showing project location, project boundary and/or project effect locations and any additional maps showing project details. Photographs, power point presentations and other supplemental information are excellent to help specialists in making their determinations. (If you have GIS shape files already generated please provide their location on the O-drive.)

**IDT specialists for this project are listed below. Contact them if you should have any questions regarding their resource and your project.**

Wildlife- Rema B. Sadak

Fisheries-Katherine Thompson

Plants-Mike Hays

Hydrology-Bill Conroy

Cultural (Clearwater)-

Cultural (Nez Perce)-Steve Lucas

Soils – Cara Farr/Stephen Holland

Date submitted: 4/22/2013

Submit form electronically to [lshelm@fs.fed.us](mailto:lshelm@fs.fed.us)

## Projects in Roadless Areas

What is the roadless area name: <i>The Forest has two roadless layers. The Idaho Roadless Rule and the Forest Plan Appendix C layer. See the maps and information at O:\NFS\NezPerceClearwater\Project\MultiBasin\Planning\ActiveSmallNepa\Info_Re_Roadless_Wilderness_RNA_WSR_Municipal_ceCategory</i>	<u>Idaho Roadless Area Name:</u>  <u>Forest Plan IRA Name:</u>
Identify the Idaho Roadless Management classification because permitted activities vary by classification. Classifications include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wild land recreation</li> <li>Special Areas of historic or Tribal Significance</li> <li>Primitive</li> <li>Backcountry restoration</li> <li>General Forest, Rangeland and Grassland</li> </ul>	<u>Classification:</u>
Does the project involve cutting trees? Yes No <i>If yes, see 36 CFR 294.24</i>	
Does the project involve removing minerals, including common variety minerals? Yes No <i>If yes, see 36 CFR 294.25</i>	
Does the project involve constructing or reconstructing roads? Yes No <i>If yes, see 36 CFR 294.23</i>	

## Projects involving Road Construction, Reconstruction, Temporary Roads, and/or Haul Routes

*Specialists will address items in italics below.*

ACCESS CONSIDERATIONS	YES/ NO	MITIGATION MEASURE/COMMENTS
1. Will road construction or reconstruction be required? Type of road and length.		
2. Will temporary roads be needed?		
3. Will road maintenance be needed? Who will perform?		
4. Will there be a change to the current road restrictions?		
5. Are haul roads part of an established snowmobile network?		
6. Are there public safety concerns for roads, trails, or other road improvements?		

ACCESS CONSIDERATIONS	YES/ NO	MITIGATION MEASURE/COMMENTS
7. Are there other improvements which will require protection?		
8. Does the area currently meet Forest Plan standards for soils?		
9. Will the project impact elk security?		Specialist will answer
10. Will the project or log haul impact winter range?		Specialist will answer
11. Will the project impact critical elk summer range?		Specialist will answer

## **Projects involving Vegetation or Fuels Treatment**

RESOURCE CONSIDERATION	YES/NO	MITIGATION/EXPLANATION
1. Will project meet down woody debris requirements?		
2. Will the project meet snag guidelines?		
3. Are activities proposed in PACFISH/INFISH RHCAa, riparian areas, or wetlands?		
4. Does the proposal involve ground based equipment?		
5. Does the area currently meet Forest Plan standards for soils?		
6. Will activities occur in the winter?		
7. Is the area in an active grazing allotment? What type of livestock?		
8. Is the area in a visually sensitive area (VQOs)?		
9. Are there land line survey needs?		
10. What noxious weed control measures will be employed?		
11. Are activities proposed in old growth?		